11/24/92

Leaders work to head off boycott spread

Amendment 2 draws reactions across U.S.

By **Louis Aguilar**
Gazette Telegraph

Colorado business and civic leaders, including groups in Colorado Springs, are poised to deliver a counterpunch to blunt the growing boycott of the state because of Amendment 2.

Denver Mayor Wellington Webb is among a group of business representatives planning a trip to New York City on Dec. 7 and 8 for a stop-the-boycott news conference. Webb was to fly to Los Angeles on Monday for an appearance on Arsenio Hall's late-night talk show but was stalled by weather.

In Colorado Springs, officials of the Convention and Visitors Bureau, the Chamber of Commerce and the Economic Development Corp. will meet today to discuss a response to people outraged by Amendment 2, which prohibits anti-discrimination laws for gays.

"We've gotten about 100 calls and letters from individuals who said they are canceling plans to visit Colorado Springs," said chamber President John Fowler. "We have to come to a consensus regarding what our response should be."

During the weekend in Denver, about three dozen civic and business leaders and officials of the governor's office met to discuss ways to fight the boycott movement. Among other things, the group will launch a national public-relations and educational campaign.

Meanwhile, anti-Colorado sentiment continues. Among the goings-on:

■ The National Organization for Women canceled a conference of its state coordinators that was to be held in Denver on Feb. 21-22.

■ The National Association of Hispanic Journalists is expected to decide today whether to vote on canceling its March 1993 convention planned in Denver. The association has more than 2,000 members.

■ In Los Angeles, a public-relations specialist, Phil Lobel, said he is working on a campaign to persuade entertainers to stay away from Colorado.

■ In Toronto, members of the North American Society for the Sociology of Sport are advocating the

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and was arrested by police a few minutes later. It turned out that Baitinger was the victim of a practical joke by a co-worker, Alvin Blome, said police Lt. Jon Wainwright of Evesham, N.J. Blome was charged with disorderly conduct. Blome was in front of Baitinger at a bank's drive-in line Friday. Before leaving, he placed a note in the cash drawer saying he had a bomb and demanding money, Wainwright said. Blome thought Baitinger would open the drawer and see the note before it got to the teller, but he didn't. The teller handed over the money and called police, who arrested Baitinger. "We didn't believe him at first since they found the money on him," Wainwright said. But finally Blome called the police station and 'fessed up.

Keno

MONDAY NIGHT'S NUMBERS:

7	10	11	13
16	20	30	36
37	39	40	43
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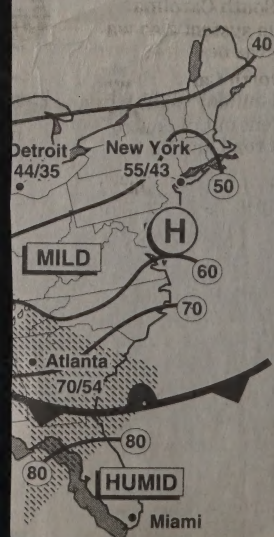
54	58	59	60



Amendment 2/Denver may suffer the most from group protests

From A1

boycott of sporting events held in Colorado and sports-related tourism. The group is composed of more than 1,000 academics and professionals who work in sports training.

■ In Denver, a group called Boycott Colorado said it has begun contacting out-of-state businesses and organizations. One of those businesses is Minneapolis-based 3M Corp., which recently agreed to buy up to 190 acres in Colorado Springs for a future plant.

"It was so out of the blue, that, of course, we couldn't really take a position on it," said 3M public affairs director Lowell Ludford.

Ironically, it is Denver that is feeling the brunt of the boycott. Denver, along with Aspen and Boulder, had gay rights laws that were overturned by Amendment 2. And voters in all three cities rejected the measure, which passed 53 percent to 47 percent statewide Nov. 3.

"We have to stop this message that we are a state endorsing hate," said Ken Parks, vice president of the Greater Denver Chamber of Commerce.

Not all critics of Amendment 2 have taken anti-Colorado positions. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Human Rights Campaign Fund are waiting for a clear indication from local gay and lesbian groups before taking a stand on a boycott.

"We don't want to hurt people or businesses who have supported us," Human Rights Campaign Fund spokeswoman Kay Osterberg said.

It's difficult to measure the effects of a boycott. Five years ago, then-Arizona Gov. Evan Mecham refused to recognize Martin Luther King Jr. as an official state holiday. A national boycott resulted and the state lost an estimated $190 million in convention business and tourism, said Phoenix Convention and Visitors Bureau spokesman Tony Alba. This year, Arizona voters approved the holiday.

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